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POEMS OF MANY MOODS.

POEMS OF MANY MOODS,

BY



C. G. FENNER.

"CERTES IT WAS OF HERTE ALL THAT HE SANG."

Chaucer.

BOSTON:

CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.

MDCCCXLVI.

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NON NOBIS DOMINE.

THE grateful heart's sublimest Pæan
Was never lifted by the Teian
Or the Roman's stately muse,
But when the king of the Hebrews
Sung "Non nobis, Domine!"
For it is of the Lord that we
Alone can Act, can Will, can Be :
And every chant that poor Self-praise
With its thin utterance can raise,
Still faileth in the deepest sense
Of power from great God-Confidence.

When the mariner from far
Hails the ocean's crimson star
Flashing from the old head-land,
As his rough and honest hand
Grasps the helm with heart of cheer
That the longed-for port is near,
Let this reaper of the sea
Sing "Non nobis Domine."
Circumnavigating all
The weltering oceans of this ball,
He has sailed o'er Indian seas
Where the pictured savages
In their slim canoes have brought
Famous toys, fantastic wrought,
For those milder savages
In the lands remote from these ;
And his good ship's timbers groan
With nard and mace and cinnamon,
Spices breathing odors pure
For th' heaped board of Epicure ;
Sugared figs and clustered dates,
And all rarest delicates
For Apicius and his mates.
Richest cargoes swell his hold
To transmute to yellow gold,
Which shall gild his years from hence
With the warm glow of competence.

No gun of pirate swept his deck,
No mutinous blood his white sails fleck,
No treacherous lights by cruel hands
Displayed, allured to greedy sands,
No rock with din terrific crashed
Through his ship's ribs, or lightning flashed
Blind fear and panic on the sea ; —
His the " Non nobis Domine."

Sinks the red sun lazily,
Steals the night on hazily,
 When the harvest home is come ;
Move the full wains leisurely,
Plods the farmer measurely,
 As the last load windeth home ;
Tranquil joy doth movingly
Swell his large heart lovingly,
 As he sees his meadows mown ;
Then O let him cheerfully
Raise his glad eyes tearfully,
 Grateful to the good God own
By his care so kindly
Shed on mortals mindfully
 He has reaped what he has sown :
Paul may plant all prayerfully,
Apollos water carefully,
 God the increase gives alone.

His choice almoner is he,
Let him then on bended knee
Vow his liberal charity
Shall say "Non nobis Domine."

When the lover clasps his maiden,
And their hearts with bliss deep laden
Flow together like two seas,
Gently meeting
With soft beating,
In that holy hour let these
'Mid their high felicity
Say "Non nobis Domine."

When the poet's pen deep dipt
In the soul's bright Castaly
Traces the eternal line ;
When the artist's pencil, tipt
With the sunset's crimson sea,
Paints at last the lov'd design ; —
And their hearts from custom free
Challenge fair posterity ; —
Then let each on bended knee
Say "Non nobis Domine !"
For of Him was the great thought
That silently in each one wrought,
And was to this perfection brought.

All, O God, is Thine, is Thine ;
Nought that is will I call mine,
Ever will I raise to thee
My “ Non nobis Domine ! ”

DE PROFUNDIS CLAMAVI.

Up from the deeps, O God, I cry to thee,
Hear the soul's prayer, hear thou her litany,
O thou who saith, "Come, wanderer, home to me!"

Up from the deeps of sorrow, wherein lie
Dark secrets veiled from earth's unpitying eye,
My prayers, like star-crowned angels, God-ward fly.

Up from the deeps of joy, deep tides that swell
With fulness that the heart can never tell,
Thanks shall ring clear as rings a festal bell.

From the calm bosom when in quiet hour
God's holy spirit reigns with largest power,
Then shall each thought in prayer's white blossom
flower.

From the dark mine, where slow Thought's diamond
burns,

Where the Gold-spirits vein their rugged urns,
From that grim Cyclop-forge my spirit turns,

And gazes upward at thy clear blue sky,
And 'midst the light that floods it does espy
Bright stars unseen by superficial eye.

Where Sin's Red Dragons lie in caverns deep,
And glare with stony eyes that never sleep,
And o'er the Heavenly Fruit strict ward do keep ;

Thence my poor heart, long struggling to get free,
Torn by the strife, in painful agony
Crieth O God, my God, deliver me !

Up from the thickest tumult of the game,
Where spring Life's arrows with unerring aim, .
My shaft of Prayer, Acestes' like, shall flame.

Not from Life's shallows, where the waters sleep
A dull low marsh, where stagnant vapors creep,
But ocean voiced, deep calling unto deep,

As he of old, King David, called to thee,
As cries the heart of poor Humanity,
" Clamavi, Domine, exaudi me ! "

LA DOLEUR.

BEETHOVEN.



I.

I LIE upon a rocky shore,
I hear the waters evermore
Roll landward with a heavy roar
And plunges deep ;
The great Atlantic pouring swift
Its breast on high doth slowly lift,
Then swells into each craggy rift
With long drawn sweep.
Up painfully and slow
The rushing waters flow.
Thus comes the ocean might
Of sorrows warning,
Rolling from morn till night,
From night till morning.

II.

I lie and listen to the thunder,
Entranced in delightful wonder, —
The stanch rock trembles as asunder
 The waters break,
And with a voice of awful gloom
The sullen waves majestic boom
Upon their barren stony tomb,
 They scarce can shake, —
And heavily and solemn
Rolls in the mighty column.
 Thus strongest hopes do fail,
 Firm though they be,
When Fate's rock they assail,
 Backward they flee.

III.

Here where the murmurous waters rush
Rock-ward with up-welling gush,
Sometimes there seems to be a hush
 I' th' midst of flow,
And bright drops in the caverns tinkle,
Star-like they fall with finest twinkle,
And dulcet music do they sprinkle
 Tender and low ;
 And pleasant is their ringing,
 Like children's voices singing.

Thus in the darkest day
Happy moments come,
None so sad but he can say,
I too have some.

IV.

Now I lay with closed eyes,
Leaden deeps do fall and rise,
Momently each lives and dies,
Yet ever heaves
The same untiring drifting sweep,
Still does the bosom of the deep
Eternal undulation keep
Nor rest achieves ;
But constant is the motion
Of the great heart of ocean.
So life's surging sea
Knoweth no rest,
So, poor mortality,
Heaves thy sad breast.

SONG.



I.

THE leaves are stirring on every tree,
And their gentle murmuring seems
Like the voices of the loved and lost,
As I hear them in my dreams.

II.

The cricket's chirp but faintly heard,
And the brooklet gushing by,
And the carol of that little bird
Far up in the clear blue sky,

III.

All tell of love and happiness,
Of a life of joy and bliss ; —
Ah why should I be thus downcast
In a fair scene like this ?

IV.

Ah, if my thoughts but turn within
They see a clouded sky,
The little murmuring brook no more,
But a torrent rushing by.

V.

And heavy and damp around me roll
The mists of care and sin,
My song of birds is the sigh of a soul
That finds no rest within.

THE PILGRIM AT HEAVEN'S GATE.

CASTA PLACENT SUPERIS
PURA CUM VESTE VENITE.

England's Helicon. 1600.

I.

My Robe of Life is travel-worn,
And dusty with the dusty way,
It beareth marks of many a storm,
It beareth marks of many a fray, —
The morning shower, the damp night dews
Have left their dark discoloring hues.

II.

My Robe of Life is scorched and burnt
By madly rushing through the fires,
Where sternest teachings I have learnt
From passionate and fell desires;
Yet not without the loss of chaste
White innocence, no more replaced.

III.

My Robe of Life is blood-besprent, —
For though I never raised the knife
To smite my brother's breast, I've sent
A sharper steel through his soul's life,
And made his heart to bleed by deep
And angry words that murdered sleep.

IV.

My Robe of Life is tear-bedewed, —
Tears wrung from mine and other's eyes,
That I so oft have shunned the good,
That ever round us, God-sent, lies,
And tears by deeper anguish forced
From consciousness of virtue lost.

V.

My Robe of Life is sin-bespotted,
And much bewrayed by anxious care,
And here and there grown thin and rotted
Away by too much wear and tear, —
And torn by thorny thickets, when
Through them I sought the road again.

VI.

My Robe of Life at first was fair
And spotless as the driven snow,
'T was flung around me gently there
Where spirits first from Heaven do go;
And white and clean it seemed to be
A type of God's own purity.

VII.

O, angel at the Heavenly Gate,
How can I hope to enter, when
At that high portal, lone and late,
At closing eve I come again,
After my life-day spent and past,
With this worn life-robe round me cast?

VIII.

I hear a voice that soft and low
Bids me to him, my Saviour, fly,
And he will cleanse as white as snow
Or whitest wool this robe, and I
From him a wedding-robe shall have
When this is mouldered in the grave.

IX.

A wedding-garment, brighter far
Than that I did at first receive,
Brighter than gleam of silvery star
My Saviour, Christ, to me will give ;
And flinging off Life's Robe, will I
Put on my Immortality.

THE SHRINE AND THE CONFESSIONAL.

“That good thinketh good may do
And God will help him thar to.”

CASTEL OF LOVE, 1250.

IN the ruined Hall of Life
Plunged in deep remorse I sit,
Rent and shattered is the roof,
Trembling to its fall is it ;
In rank, wild luxuriance,
Has the ivy Habit clung
Round those mouldering buttresses,
And those ruined towers among.

Shattered strength and falling tower, —
Saints, once honored, now defaced, —
Streams the night-wind drear and cold
Where the shrine of old was placed.

O thou stern and awful wreck,
Desolate and waste and wild !
A callous man I stand again
Where once I knelt, a pure, young child.

And a dark and cowed form,
Slow, unmoving, sits and sighs,
Veil'd its face, I only see
Those earnest, dark, and mournful eyes ;—
Visitant, I know thy name ;
Deep within my inmost heart
Thrills the pang that tells too well,
Thou the Avenging Angel art.

While I gaze the bitter tears
Scalding fall from straining eyes,
Dread and anguish, startling fears
With the past stern memories rise.
I am sinful, frail, and weak,
O my God, a child of dust,
I have sinned ; O spirit pure,
Help me, for in Thee I trust !

.

See that veiled form arise —
Back the gloomy cowl she throws !
Gentler beam those sad, soft eyes,
From those lips how gently flows

Soothing speech of soothing power,
“Mortal, 'dread me not, but hear,
The Angel of Repentance, I
Bid thee look up, and never fear.

Leave this ruined shrine, depart,
Upward, onward, lies thy way,
Upward, with a cheerful heart,
Onward, for 't is breaking day ;
Thou hast dwelt in night too long,
List those cheering notes, nor stay,
Hear the angels' morning song
Bidding thee to duty's way.”

Now the ruined hall is left,
On life's highway glad I stand,
Behind me lies the desert waste, —
With free heart and ready hand
Now I grasp my pilgrim staff ;
Journey on, nor look behind,
Upward, onward, o'er the hills
Till my home in God I find !

RENUNCIATION.

A GOLDEN maiden near me stands,
With eyes of soft serenest light,
A jewelled goblet in her hands
Filled to the brim with nectar bright ;
And yet, and yet, I must not taste,
But veil my eyes and from her haste.

Her arms, all lily-white and fair,
Around my neck she throws them now ;
Her quick breath stirs my floating hair
As leans her cheek upon my brow ;
And yet, and yet, I must away,
Nor on her breast entranced lay.

Her dewy lips she joins to mine,
And thrills the touch through nerve and vein ;
Not all the fiercest joys of wine
E'er stirred my soul with such sweet pain ;
And yet, and yet, I must not press
The passionate return caress.

Her broken words, like fitful sighs
Of midnight wind in dimmest grove,
On my heart's swelling deep do rise,
Half-uttered words of earnest love ;—
And yet, and yet, I must not hear,
Lest to me prove the maid too dear.

Trembling like dew-bell on the leaf
Of rarest snow-drop, in her eyes
The pure tear stands, and tender grief
Doth with her white breast fall and rise ;—
And yet, and yet, I must not speak,
Be still, O heart, thou canst but break !

WORDS TO THE DREAMER.

“ Man is no star, but a quick coal
Of mortal fire,
Who blows it not, nor doth control
A faint desire,
Lets his own ashes choke his soul.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

UP, dreamer, from thy reverie !
Up, dreamer, and away !
Sit not with folded hands so long
From morn till closing day.

The sun is ever turning round,
He scorneth to be still, —
The trees shoot upward from the ground,
And ever runs the rill.

Winds ever blow, clouds ever move,
And ever stir the leaves,
And the glad sea, eternally
In solemn grandeur heaves.

The stars are moving every one
Onward in paths of light,
Ever you hear the ceaseless hum
Of Nature, morn and night.

Up, dreamer, from thy reverie !—
The warrior's blade is dim
That idly rests within its sheath,
No laurels bloom for him.

The bended bow that hangs too long
Upon the castle wall
Unstrained by stalwart arm, when strung,
Snaps faithless to the call.

That Tome of olden minstrelsie,
Dust-covered on thy shelf,
When opened,— lo ! the worm hath gnawed
Each tale of fay and elf.

The lute neglected, when at last
You strike the shattered string,
Wails forth such jangling melody,
That tear-drops sadly spring.

Up, dreamer, from thy reverie ! —
There's work for thee to do ;
Time's seed-field, white with ripened grain,
Lies open to thy view.

Take down thy sickle from the wall,
And bear thy arm for toil,
Strike in, and do not leave a straw
Of all the generous spoil.

Heap up, heap up the creaking wain
Ere blighting mildews fall,
And winnow well the golden grain,
Then safely store it all.

And thou shalt know how sweet is toil,
And glad thy heart shall be
When thou shalt gaze on thy rich store,
Seed for Eternity.

FIFE MUSIC.



TIME has been the pensive flute
Or the lulling sound of lute,
Stole so on my soul that I,
Lapped in their soft melody,
Seemed in tranquil bliss to float
Onward with each wave-like note.
Time has been the warlike tone
Of many brazen trumpets blown
Mingling with the deeper gloom
Yearning from the sad bassoon,
Roused so that I longed to dare
All the stern fierce joys of war.
Time has been the sound of horn
Through the distant valley borne,

Filling all the listening air
With a tone beyond compare,
Always did beget in me
Plenitude of harmony.

Now no more these lovely seem,
But as sounds heard in a dream,
Ere the clear morn comes to me
With its wakening reveillè ;
Then the onward tramp of Life
Best keeps time to thrilling fife.
This the sound is of the blast
By the bald mount rushing past ; —
This the sound is of the yell
Mingling with the sharp-toned bell
When the Demon of the Steam
Wildly shrieks his fearful scream,
Emblematical to me
Of on-rushing Destiny ; —
This the sound is of the cry
Heard far up in depth of sky
When the eagle proudly soars,
Cleaves his way with “ feathered oars,”
And with calm majestic sweep
Vanishes i’ th’ upper deep ;
What to this the note of dove
Cooing to its tender love,

What the melancholy tale
Of the mournful nightingale,
What the plaintive whippoorwill,
By this eagle-music shrill?

Clear, unwavering, piercing, fine,
Is this chosen music mine,
Drawn from smallest instrument,
Simplest made, without ostent,
So that ever 'tis to me
Evangel and homily.
Hero-like, its prophet tone
Soundeth ever all alone,
And above the beat of drums
To my ears its music comes,
Telling me of bravest deeds
Where th' embattled squadron bleeds.

When I lay me down at last
With my battered arms off-cast,
Raise no low dirge round my bed
Be no muttered "valè" said,
But to ease the soul's last strife
Wake the highest note of fife, —
As it rises so shall I
Till it pierce the arched sky,

And I wafted up shall be
With its lark-like melody,
Till its soaring note shall end
Where all sounds harmonious blend.

SERENADE.



AIR — "Of all the brave birds."



WHEN night winds are streaming o'er forest and tree,
And the stars gleam bright on the heaving sea,
O then to our Lady-love fair haste we,
And breathe on the air our minstrelsie.

Sing clear, sing clear,

Say does she hear?

The night is fair.

Then, Lady, look forth, and let thine eyes
Shame the bright star-light of yonder skies.

Wake — wake — wake — wake,
And day of this noon of night, O make!
Loveliness and beauty ne'er seem so fair,
As when they look forth on the midnight air.

O sweet is the silent midnight hour,
When moonbeams sleep on each frail white flower,
And hushed is the voice in the lady's bower,
And the heart is filled with spirit-power.

Sing low, sing low,
What dreams she now ?
Some dream of Love.

Then calm be her sleep, and calm be her brow,
And peacefully folded her white arms now.

Rest — rest — rest — rest,
As deep as the flower by the breeze caressed,
Tranquilly and gentle, peaceful and calm,
While angels shield her from every harm.

THE MARINER'S SONG ON A WINTRY NIGHT.



1.

'T IS a bitter cold night on the wintry sea,
And cheerless the winds are blowing,
But I know that at home there 's a heart for me
With the warmest true love glowing.
Then here 's to the lassie o' sweet sixteen,
With her rosy lips and her bright blue een,
God bless her !
O how I long on this wintry night,
To throw my arms round that form so light,
And to my bosom press her.

II.

'T was a summer eve, and the day was gone,
 And the sun had sunk in the billow,
 When I met my love by the brook alone,
 All down by the bending willow ;
 The big tear stood in her sparkling eye,
 And her white breast heaved with a bursting sigh,
 God bless her !
 She laid her head on my breast and wept,
 And the warm tear down my bosom crept,
 As I to my heart did press her.

III.

“ I know, I know,” thus the dear one spake,
 “ That thou wilt love me ever,
 But, O ! my sad, sad heart will break
 If thou and I must sever ! ”
 I bade her dry her gushing tears,
 And give to the winds her anxious fears,
 God bless her !
 “ The fleeting year will soon go by,
 And then to my love I'll return,” said I,
 As I to my heart did press her.

IV.

Then what though the winds are sweeping cold
As we fly o'er the freezing billow ;
I know, as we sweep past each landmark old,
I am nearing my home and the willow.
And soon, O soon, on my native shore
I'll meet my maid, and we'll part no more,
God bless her !
And, ah ! what tongue can paint the bliss
Of the warm embrace and the rapturous kiss,
When I to my heart shall press her !

DREAM LAND.

“ Yet he beholds her with the eyes of mind,
He sees the form which he no more shall meet ;
She like a passionate thought is come and gone
While at his feet the bright rill bubbles on.”

ELLIOT OF SHEFFIELD.

A POET'S land is Dream Land,
The Land of shadowy forms ;
Its broad, fair realms unclouded stand
Amid Life's darkest storms.
Though Earth's rent sky to thunder peals
Reëchoes oft and loud,
No tempest o'er fair Dream Land steals,
Its pure skies wear no cloud.

I love to roam through Dream Land,
Fair faces there I greet,
I hear old voices soft and bland,
My childhood's friends I meet ;
I see old faces peering out
Along those vistas vast,
And troops of shining ones I see
On cloud-like wing glide past.

There is a gentle river,
That girts a pleasant strand ;
The green trees softly quiver,
That gem that verdant land ;
There is a bower of roses,
And perfumed eglantine,
And in that bower reposes
A long-lost friend of mine.

Edith ! I 've loved thee ever,
Though years, long years, have past
Since Death the bonds did sever
That bound our spirits fast ;
I stand by morn and even
There by thy grassy grave,
While memory with cool waters
My burning brow doth lave.

I muse upon each token
Of boyhood's precious love,
Each kiss, each fond word spoken,
My Edith, saint above !
But most, dear one, in Dream Land
I gaze for many an hour,
Upon thy dear familiar form
In that cool shaded bower.

O ! though Life's cares assail me,
And troublous thoughts arise,
And black with sullen tempests
Lower round me sorrow's skies, —
There yet is my own Dream Land,
All fresh and ever bright,
Through which I roam, dear Edith,
And meet thee night by night.

I feel again the pressure
Of thy beloved hand,
As hand in hand we wander
Around that Holy Land ;
A calm delight steals o'er me,
Each care is lulled to rest,
I seem with those bright ones to be
A blest one with the blest.

A Poet's joy is Dream Land,
It fadeth soon away,
Its happy visions vanish
With light of coming Day ;
And then stern Duties meet me ;
I grasp the hard, cold hand
Of the Actual that doth greet me,
And gone is fair Dream Land.

MARS AND VENUS.

I HAVE dallied too long in the bowers
Where the beautiful maidens are,
Weaving bright chaplets of flowers
To twine with their waving hair.

I have quaffed the luscious juice
Of the 'wildering grape too long,
And sung the praises of Dionus
In the Bacchan girl's wild song.

Cease those passionate kisses,
That melt like honeyed dew ;
I must fly from the bower where bliss is,
Away from them and you.

My steed impatient paws the ground,
And churns the frittering foam,
And echoes wildly round and round
His neigh, like a trumpet tone.

I tear myself away — away !
How the plain skims by ! Hurrah !
How clear and fresh is the breath of day,
How pure yon morning star !

ANEMONE.



I.

I HEARD at dawn a chime of bells —
A pleasant chime of bells from far ;
It stole adown the deepening dells,
Each note “as perfect as a star.”

II.

Clear was the air that summer morn,
And cool upon my heated frame ;
It seemed as never cloud or storm
Could dark those heavens so blue again.

III.

And beautiful and fresh and fair
A gentle girl near me did stand,
With wild flowers twined in her hair,
And gathered cowslips in her hand.

IV.

But there was in her soul-lit eye
A light that was not caught from Earth,
And her cheek's flush was not the dye
Of creatures of a mortal birth.

V.

And on her pure young breast there lay
A floweret which I wept to see,
Such sad revealings it did say,
That frail white flower — Anemone.

THE POOR MAN TO THE WORLD.

“Here let me speak out and be heard, too, while I tell it; that the world does not at all times know how unsafely it sits. When Despair has loosed Honor’s last hold upon the heart, when transcendent wretchedness has laid weeping Reason in the dust, when every unsympathizing on-looker is deemed an enemy—who THEN can limit the consequences?”

WILLIAM THOM, THE BEGGAR-POET.

O BACK, ye thoughts, that fire my brain!

Down, down, ye thoughts that must not rise!

Ye hunger-fiends, with words that fain

Would make me think ye from the skies;

Your promises of good are vain,

Your gliding serpent-words are lies!

True I am poor ; ay, poor, by Heaven !

Not as those sighing mourners are
Who better days have seen, and even
In their reverses feel the care
Of Patrons, and to whom is given
Enough to keep them from despair ; —

But I am POOR, poor from my birth, —
Have never known a single hour
Since naked, hurled upon the Earth,
When competence was in my power, —
Seen happy faces round my hearth,
At even's holy gathering hour.

Poor ! soaked in tears my hard-earned bread,
Ay, and of that a scanty meal,
And well I know how the half-fed
An aching, craving yearning feel,
Then creep off silently to bed,
By sleep the hunger-pangs to heal.

And 'neath a shattered roof I 've lain
All night, and seen the stars course on
In silence o'er the Heavenly Plain,
Till morning dawned and they were gone,
And brought another day of pain,
And Poverty, and want, and scon.

And I have seen my dear ones die —
Ay, dear ones, dear as rich men's are ;
There was no skilful hand then nigh,
T' assuage the pains that they did bear ;
I could not weep — they did but fly
Forever from a world of care.

And I have felt the winter's blast
Cut keenly through my aching frame,
And heard the tempest howling past
Without one spark of generous flame,
And prayed each hour might be my last ;
But no, another morning came !

All these, and countless pangs beside,
I long have borne, I still do bear :
The haughty sneer of frozen pride,
The world's unsympathizing stare,
The needed charity denied,
And darker wrongs that wake Despair.

Outcast and hated do I stand
Alone upon the broad free sod,
And no one takes me by the hand
Or tells me of our Father God,
But ever rings the harsh command, —
“ Go delve, and starve, and work, and plod ! ”

And think ye, sons of wealth, that ne'er
The Poor Man's heart grows fierce and stern ?
That maddening thoughts of dark Despair
Ne'er in his sad soul glow and burn ?
I bid ye, silken slaves, beware !
The worm ye tread upon may turn !

For we are strong — our brawny frames
That bear the hardest ills of life,
Can also bear the joyful pains
That wait upon the battle-strife ;
The hands that reap the rich man's grains,
Can also wield the keen-edged knife.

Our stalwart arms can wheel the gun,
Our patience tire your oft attacks,
And were the contest but begun
Your ranks would fly like scattered flax ;
Robbed of all else beneath the sun
We still have left the torch and axe.

Ye slumber on a crater's brink,
Ye scornful sons of wealth and pride ; —
But down, ye thoughts, I must not think !
Be still, fell whisperer at my side !
For I will bear and never shrink
Ere the Red Horse to bliss I'll ride.

O gentle Christ ! thou, too, wast poor,
And hadst not where to lay thy head ;
Thou hast a crown laid up in store
For those who faithful lives have led ;
And they shall lie forevermore
In Abraham's Bosom, thou hast said.

THE ELFIN MAIDS.

"Races three of Elfin maids,
Wander through this peopled earth ;
One to guard the hours of love,
One to haunt the homely hearth,
One to cheer the festal board."

EDDA, LAY OF VAFTHRUDNI.

'Tis now many years ago,
Since, my own dear bride,
We as youthful lovers sat,
Often side by side.

Thy small hand was clasped in mine,
And thy head did lay
On my shoulder, as we sat
At the close of day.

Gentle vows of truth and love
How we murmured oft,—
Vows of faith and constancy,
Uttered low and soft !

Then we blessed the Elfin maid,
Whose soft wing we felt
Sweeping o'er our brows, when we
In adoration knelt.

Years past ; and I, a manly sire,
With children on my knee,
Sat by my own warm cottage-fire,
Contented, proud, and free.

And thou, a modest, loving wife,
Wast happy in our cot ;
We cared not for the world's poor strife,
But blest our happy lot.

And as at eve we fervent prayed
Our good might ever last,
We saw another Elfin maid
On shadowy wing glide past.

And then we thanked our God in Heaven,
That He to us on earth,
Such beings pure and good had given,
To haunt our homely hearth.

And now around our festal board—
Wife, children, friends and all—
I envy not the miser's hoard,
Or monarch's gilded hall.

My heart with adoration swells,
To Him my knee is bent,
Each happy face around me tells
A tale of sweet content.

And look ! that gentle form behold !
With meekly folded hands,
And dazzling wings of purest gold,
A being holy stands !

Bear up, O Elfin maid ! my prayer
Of thankfulness and praise,
To Him, my God in every care,
The Ancient One of Days.

CHANSON.



TIME, my pretty maiden,
Cometh heavy laden
 With woes and cares,
 And he prepares
Wrinkles for blooming cheeks,
And enviously he seeks
 To strew gray hairs.

But toucheth he the heart ?
Can he to love impart
 His own decay ?
 Not so, I say !
Time shall be, is, and was,
But Love, my pretty coz,
 Is one long to-day.

Lovers know nought of Time —
They hear his midnight chime,
 But care beguile,
 And look and smile
So sweetly in each other's faces,
That, though Time swiftly paces,
 They know it not the while.

WINNIPISEOGEE LAKE.

THE blue waves gently kiss the strand
And flow along the pebbly shore,
Then rippling leave the verdant land
And seek the lake's calm breast once more.
No white sail gleams upon the wave,
Nor motion hath it, save its own
Bright flow of waters, and no sound
Save its own gentle moan.

And deep and pure the summer blue
Reflected in its bosom lies,
And mirrored there intensely true
The thousand-tinted foliage dyes.

Far towering stretch the pine hills round,
And from those leafy seas so dim
I hear the wind's mysterious sound,
Like faint heard angel's hymn.

Nature, kind mother ! from this scene
Of holy and serenest calm,
May the sad soul a lesson glean,
A soothing tone midst life's alarm : —
To bid each stormy passion rest,
And lie in lake-like, calm repose,
With sunshine sleeping on my breast,
Till death-shades round me close.

MOUNT WASHINGTON.

DEEP rooted in the rock-ribbed earth
When sang the stars their morning hymn,
Ere man or nations sprang to birth,
And Nature rose from Chaos dim:
The same vast piles of granite bare
Silent and stern, and changing never,
Unworn amidst Time's ceaseless wear,
And still unworn, and thus forever.

Aeons of Aeons round thy head
Have rolled their misty shrouds of Time,
And answering each God's call have sped,
And left thee there, still lone, sublime.

Stand at the base and gaze above, —
Stand on the bald and barren peak, —
Gaze on, and let thy soul be filled, —
Forbear the vain attempt to speak.

Are they not silent all, these vast
And stately monuments of earth?
Speak they with audible voice the Past,
Tell they their tales of woe or mirth?
Stand they not passionless and lone,
Firm rooted in th' Immense, the Broad,
Uttering no voice, or joy, or moan,
Types of the Silent Depth of God?

TO A MAIDEN.



THERE is a soft and winning grace,
A compound of all loveliness,
That plays around thy sad, sweet face.

Thy voice is like a faint-heard tone,
Stealing o'er us when alone,
Murmuring brook, or pine-grove's moan ; —

Or a distant melody,
Sung beneath some old oak tree,
Softly, sadly, mournfully.

When thy mild blue gentle eye,
Slowly raised so maidenly,
Shrinkingly, yet trustingly,

Meets my own, a mild delight
Steals upon each sense, as light
As a soft breeze in the night.

Do I mark thy rosy blush
Faintly shed its graceful flush?
'Tis like a wine-cup's overgush.

And sweet songs of other time,
With their quaint and olden rhyme,
Sweeter sound from lips of thine.

Maiden, thou wilt never know
That thou hast impressed me so,
With thy beauty's gentle glow.

Thus with each best influence —
Whether of the outward sense,
Or of pure intelligence,

Thus it stealeth o'er us still
And quiet, and our souls doth fill,
Without effort of the will.

THE ROSE I GAVE YOU.

SUMMER sun and evening dews
With their magic did infuse
All their potent loveliness
In this bud of tenderness ;
Soothing winds their influence gave
To make it open, fresh and brave ;
Sweeping rains did wash away
All the dust of grosser day ;
Finest sap into it rilled,
In alembic fine distilled,
In the caverns dim and small,
'Neath the crust of this green ball ; —

By such subtle alchemy
It became what now we see.

Plucked by finger of a friend,
Let me trace thee to thy end :
Little floweret, let me see
What has been thy history.

Where the brethren gather calm,
When the breath of morning balm
Wakes the day-life to its duty,
And the heart is filled with Beauty, —
On the Bible was it laid,
When I rose, and trusting prayed : —
And I prayed our lives might be
Flower-like incense such as thee,
Crimson-flushed with struggle's tide,
In the blood of sorrow dyed,
Beautiful in leaf and form,
Yet with sharp concealed thorn ; —
Thus my brother's little gift
Did my soul to Heaven lift.

Then I bore it on my heart
To the city's crowded mart,
Through the thoroughfares of men
To a quiet shrine again.

In the silent church I trod,
Felt around the Living God,
Felt that never voice of priest
That deep Holiness increased :
Still it was, and calm, and noiseless,
Holier far for being voiceless,
And upon the altar's rail
Laid I then this floweret frail ;
It seemed to me that it indeed
Hallowed, more than 'twas hallowed.
Then I bore it in my hand
Till together we did stand
In the presence of the Flower
Of the artist-soul of power ;
And saw the colors blending there
Like harmonies of music rare,
Like blessings in a mother's prayer,
And quietly informing all
With grandeur in that orient Hall.
Thus Art and Nature met together
In that sweet hour of sunny weather,
And Love, such Love as spirits know,
Our full, full hearts did overflow.

And now the faded flower is thine ;
What varied thoughts do swift combine

To make of it a sacred treasure,
Sacred beyond all earthly measure ;
For I do believe that it
Has been baptized i' th' Infinite,
And its essence now is fraught
With th' Immortality of Thought.
Let its petals swift decay,
Let it crumble as it may,
The bright thought can never die
Which doth the floweret underlie,
And its Destiny I see,
A bloom of Immortality.

LEANORE.



It is long since we have met,
But I never can forget
All her words of truth to me,
Spoken tenderly and free :
Words that flowed from heart of one,
Sad, and desolate, and lone,
In this wide earth, where she trod
With no other but her God,
And the two or three who chose
To love her better for her woes.

O Leanore ! as I look back
Upon Life's worn and trodden track,

And the spots where we have dwelt
In oneness, and our souls have felt
All the Mystery of Being

Gather thickly round each heart,
Tears arise that check my seeing
For the time, and thus apart,
Our souls commingling rush together
As erst they did,
When out amid

The rising storms of Life's dark wintry weather.

Where art thou now, O maiden?
My spirit, heavy laden,
Fain would it fly unto thee,
My eyes would gladly view thee,
That we again might blend our hearts
In sincere commune; and the darts
Which fall so thick around us,
Which sorely, sadly wound us,
We might avert
Nor let them hurt,

As once we did, when other days were round us.

We were two children madly striving,
To know the Mystery of Living, —
And our God an answer sent
To our spirits, as they blent

In one earnest, firm endeavor
To reveal the meaning,
That comes like lightning streaming
Through that great word, "Forever."

It was an answer full of grief,
But it gave a sweet relief
To our souls ; — and when we parted,
Sorrowful and broken-hearted,
Though the tear-drops filled our eyes,
Yet their glance was on the skies,
And the light of Faith shone through,
As sun-beams on a drop of dew ;
And I know where'er thou art,
In a dark nook of thy heart,
When the crowd of men is gone,
And thou sittest all alone,
Then again we dwell together,
As erst we did,
When out amid
The rising storms of Life's dark, wintry weather.

O Leanore ! we did unroll
Together the vast, Mystic Scroll,
Which Life and Nature did present
To our bewildered wonderment.

It open lay upon our knees,
And as we felt the freshening breeze
Of early days around us sweeping,
And saw Youth's fountains upward leaping,
We read together from that page
The Tale of Time's great Heritage ;
And as we read, we felt the thrill
Of mystery around us still.

O Leanore ! long years have sped,
At least they seem so unto me,
And we have both still farther read,
And therefore 'tis I would see thee,
And learn what lesson they have taught,
What varied stores of learning brought ;
Not learning, as the book-men deem
Their shadowy, vain, and wordy dream, —
But teachings of the higher life,
With deeper, holier meanings rife ; —
I fain would know if still thou art
As free of soul, as true of heart,
As when we learnt that lore together,
As erst we did,
When out amid
The rising storms of Life's dark wintry weather.

ARA.



In the days of joyance,
Full of merry buoyance,
When thy happy childhood
Roamed in its green wild-wood,
 Where the leaves
Glossy green bent down to kiss thee,
And no gladsome thing did miss thee,
 That receives
Nature's impulse full and free, —
 Ara dear,
In those days of silver glee,
 Now no more anear,

Thou and I
Oft did lie,
I the older — which was bolder ? —
Neither colder —
'Neath the sky,
Watching clouds and shadows moving,
Ever loving, ever loving.

Over thy dear brow, ne'er shaded
By a thought of care,
Darkest tresses fell unbraided,
All unbraided there —
Darkest raven hair !
Sunny joy was ever glancing
Out from thy deep eyes ;
Gentle smiles were ever dancing
On thy lips,
Where he that sips
The magic wine of thy young spirit,
Doth arise
To the life which they inherit
In calm Grecian skies ;
Where the Gods olden,
In a life golden,
Without memory or surprise,
In the fulness of the Present,
Live a life of ceaseless Pleasant.

What strange Fortune placed thee here
In our Northern atmosphere ?
Thou wast made for idle climes : —
Creole waiting for the times .
When the fit comes, — sunny hours
Spent in dreaming, when the powers
Are all unbraced, and Nature teaches
That whoso for his object reaches,
Wastes his labor, — if he wait,
It will come and meet him straight.

O this glad Reciprocity !
Lying openly and free
To each influence that comes
From the blue, empyrean domes
Of high Heaven, or the broad roods
Of the meadows and the floods,
Or the inward springs that never
Do quite fail us, though we sever
Life from action : — thus to live
As the flowers do, thus to give,
As the flowers do, mild delights
For long days and star-lit nights : —

But alas !

Days of dalliance to me
Live alone in memory ;
And I pass

From such memories and reflections
To those sterner Introspections,
Where the unfailing wear and tear
Of a ceaseless Haste doth bear
On me, with its load of care.

Yet, dear Ara,
Thou dost carry,
Now and then, my spirits back.
To that old sun-shiny track
Where we both were young ; but now
I am old — still young art thou.

MONTANUS.

HIS HERESIE.



WITH lofty spirit to express
Unto an age of wickedness,
Thy sentence of sincere disdain ; —
To rise above the common plane
Of grovelling mortals, and to show
Thyself to all bad men a foe, —
Thy mission was : — for this, men call
Thee Heretic and Radical.

Thy unlettered common sense
Did despise the huge pretence
Of the sophist, and did draw
From thy heart the highest Law ;

Which no fine-spun theories,
Subtly drawn from else than this,
Can with perfect fulness grant
To the height of spirit-want.

From thy Phrygian Nazareth,
Where thou didst inhale with breath
Of the mountain air, its free
And quick sense of liberty,
Thou didst come, with open heart
Thy large spirit to impart.
But thy speech was rasp — severe —
Such as men love not to hear.

Thou couldst not compel thy soul
To a mean and stinted dole
Of the Holy Spirit's treasure ;
But with grand and lavish measure,
Thou didst openly declare,
It was given without spare ; —
That the promised Paraclete
Was other than an empty cheat ; —
That the Father's smile still shone
On each heart, and every one
Who would humbly live and love,
Should be anointed from above.

Thou didst teach, that God ne'er dies ;
But with ever fresh supplies
Of his Holy Spirit, guides
This green world, and the great tides
Of Time's ever-surging sea
Ebb and flow by his decree.

Thou didst teach, that Christ the risen
Did not leave in darkest prison
The dear souls he came to save ;
But the Light he to them gave,
Was a real, living Presence,
Full of everlasting pleasance,
Spreading far beyond the lines
Of Judea's cramped confines,
And beyond the paltry hour
Fraught with Apostolic power,
Spreading into endless ages,
Filling souls of countless sages,
Beautifying human life,
Soothing every angry strife,
Filling out the world's great span
With an all-embracing plan ;
And all that Time should e'er create,
The Life of Christ should permeate.

Simple, decent, chaste, severe,
Glad, content with frugal cheer,
Firm, courageous, bold and free, —
Such the Life proclaimed by thee.

And for this, thou art writ down
As a senseless village clown,
Filled with overweening pride,
Mystic, dreamer, all beside
That the so-called Catholic
Brands upon the Heretic.



SEA DRIFT.

I.

GULF WEED.



A WEARY weed, tossed to and fro,
Drearily drenched in the ocean brine,
Soaring high and sinking low,
Lashed along without will of mine ;
Sport of the spoom of the surging sea,
Flung on the foam, afar and anear ;
Mark my manifold mystery, —
Growth and grace in their place appear.

I bear round berries, gray and red,
 Rootless and rover though I be ;
My sprangled leaves, when nicely spread,
 Arboresce as a trunkless tree ;
Corals curious coat me o'er
 White and hard in apt array ;
'Mid the wild waves' rude uproar,
 Gracefully grow I, night and day.

Hearts there are on the sounding shore,
 Something whispers soft to me,
Restless and roaming forevermore,
 Like this weary weed of the sea ;
Bear they yet on each beating breast
 Th' eternal Type of the wondrous whole,
Growth unfolding amidst unrest,
 Grace informing with silent soul.
Off Abaco.

II.

NEPTUNE.



I SAW old Neptune in his coral car
Rising, one morn, from the red east afar.
And as the ocean monarch drew anear,
I noticed in his hand the trident spear.
His brow was calm and ample as was fit,
And decent majesty enclothed it ;
Upon his brow he wore a slender crown
Of spiky sea-shells, whence there fell adown,
On either side, his wealth of whitest hair,
Which veiled his neck and touched his shoulders bare.
A kingly beard adown his bosom fell,
And rested graceful on its ample swell ;
His loins, encinct with robe of Tyrrhene dye,
Rivalled the purple glories of the sky ;
His white, bare feet no sandals knew, but shone
As carved ivory on the floor o' the throne.
Dark, sleek sea horses Father Neptune drew ;
While Tritons, Nereids and the ocean crew
Disported round, amid the waters blue,
The winds were whist, and the faint rippled sea
Mirrored the upper deep's cerule Immensity.

Bahama Banks.

III.

JOACHINA.



THY Southern nature to my fancy brings
Thoughts of all tempting and delicious things ;
Of the round golden sun-kissed oranges ;
Of apricots deep blushing, growing on trees
Hung with them thick as blessings ; of large plums,
With the deep purple bloom unsmutched, where hums
The busy host of yellow-legged bees,
Enamored of their fragrant sweetnesses ;
Heaps of ripe grapes, pulled from the heated vines,
Crushed by girls' fingers into luscious wines,
That linger on the palate ; peaches rare,
Whose blushes on their downy cheeks compare
With the young Adon's, when fair Venus prest
The reluctant boy to her white, throbbing breast ;
Pears, with the odor of a thousand hives
In hollow trees on Hybla ; rich olives,
Smacking of prisoned heats ; dusk melons, netted
With braided lines ; cool juicy citrons, fretted
With a rough rind ; and all those fruits that melt
From flower buds into ripeness, where the belt
Of the broad Tropic binds with its hot zone
The breast that nurses these — nor these alone.

Havana.

IV.

MONTERO SONG.



LIGHT glitters on the Eastern hills, and on the feathery
palms ;

I leave my dark-eyed wife asleep, and glide from her
fond arms ;

My cool, white garb is lightly donned, my spurs are on
my feet, .

And girt, about my waist, is hung my iron-sheathed
machete.

My patient steed stands ready ; I load his panniers high
With long green plantains full and ripe, ere yet the dew
is dry,

And yellow sweet bananas in clusters rich and fair,

And golden oranges fresh pulled, in the cool, fresh
morning air.

The arriero's rattling note sounds from the bushes near,
The black judio's cheerful call falls pleasant on the ear,
And smartly taps the woodpecker, red-crested, on the
tree ;

All nature hails, in the morning, the Montero bold and
free.

My steed winds lightly in and out, along the rocky
road,
So steadily and easily, he hardly feels his load ;
Up hill and down, 'tis all the same ; his way he picks
along,
While I the old accustomed path cheer with my morn-
ing song.

The Don, well-mounted, dashes past with silver-hilted
sword,
The shouting slaves urge faster on the high-wheeled,
creaking load,
Their string of creeping mules before, the muleteros
drive ;
But the gallant, bold Montero is the happiest man alive !

Now in the city market-place, I take my well-known
stand ;
The round pesatas willing fall into my sun-burnt hand ;
My fruits all sold, I gladly mount my steed, and well
we know
What cheer awaits us both at home, still singing as
I go.

My long white hut is covered thick with the tough palm-
leaf thatch,
Near by the wattled-sided pens, beyond the plantain-
patch,

And here the spotted guinea fowl, with harsh discordant
cry,

And in the broad portrero, my large-limbed oxen lie.

The mountains rise behind me, the plains spread out
before,

Beyond, the line of ocean blue still flashing evermore.

Above me is the Tropic sky, as blue as blue can be.

What home like the Montero's home — Montero bold
and free ?

The Padre yearly comes to me, I yearly go to him :

I give him up his tithes, and he forgives me all my sin.

I patter Aves thrice each day ; I know my Credo well ;

And to my gallant boys and girls, the Pater Noster tell.

My gallant boys and graceful girls ! O dear they are
to me ;

I've named them all for holy saints, that they might
holy be ;

There's Pedro bold, Antonio, and modest young
Marie,

And Santiago, and San Marc, and little San Lucie. \

I love at sunset hour to sit, and see his last fond smile

Shed rosy lustre o'er the skies and on our lovely isle ;

Then press my children close around, but closest to my
side,
My dearly loved Isabel, my early chosen bride.

And night comes on so glorious, so nigh the flaming
stars !
I think then of my gallant sire who fell amid the wars ;
And tear-drops fall as falls the dew ; and then we all
arise,
And seek our simple evening meal, then peaceful close
our eyes.

No heated flames of passion and fell desire are mine,
My food is plain, and for my drink the Catalonian wine ;
My heart unstained by envy and my hand unstained by
blood, —
How happy the Montero bold, the blest of man and
God !

Cafetal, San Antonio,
Canimar, Cuba.

V.

DE VERE'S PLANTATION BELL.



AT earliest dawn, at noon, at twilight dim,
 With mournful swell,
I hear, like loneliest dirge or funeral hymn,
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Its tones are low and soft, and pensive seem
 Some grief to tell;
Ah, grief untold, I fear, fits well the theme,—
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Some dusky Mab, by night, I cannot doubt,
 Weaves lightsome spell
Of Afric home-dreams, Afric homes, without
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Of happy homes, close nestled in the shade
 Of some deep dell,
Where gather wife and children, unafraid,—
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Maids meet their lovers, clasping breast to breast ;
 But hark ! the knell
Of dream-delights, of hope, of joy, of rest,
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

They gather to their toil at earliest dawn,
 While Phosphor yet gleams well !
And, gallows-lifted, swings above the lawn,
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Then at hot noon, the pitiable crowd
 Their hunger quell
On yams and plantains ; when peals forth aloud
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Long day of toil, the frequent lash and curse,
 That *one* may sell
For yellow gold, the crop ; well serves the purse,
 De Vere's Plantation Bell !

Night comes ; the hot sun sinks, the stars are set ;
 Dusk must dispel
All hope of further greed ; with dew is wet
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Perhaps one might, were but grim justice done,
 The fate foretel
Of that stern sentinel with ruthless tongue,
 De Vere's Plantation Bell ;

'T would hang, — (ah, name it not to ears polite,)
 In populous Hell,
Its own peculiar jewel and delight,
As an "entire and perfect chrysolite," —
 De Vere's Plantation Bell.

Canimar.

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